

LACDMH HOSTS FIRST MEETING FOR COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

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More than 60 people attended the first meeting of the Los Angeles Community Roundtable hosted by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) and the United Advocates for Children and Families (UACF). The meeting was held on Monday, October 29, 2012 at the Magnolia Place Family Center in Los Angeles.

“When we exclude someone, we harm them. When we exclude someone, we also harm ourselves. When we do that, we exclude their gifts. We need to create a bigger community that includes everyone – and that is what we are trying to do here,” said LACDMH Director, Marvin Southard, D.S.W., to the attendees. “We are trying to form community and relationships... We need to stop this division of us versus them. We’re trying to stop that – and you’re part of that (effort).”



The “Community Roundtables” are one of the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) projects intended to bring coordinated stigma reduction activities to local counties and regions as part of the statewide efforts to reduce stigma. UACF was awarded with a \$2.6 million, three-year Stigma and Discrimination Reduction contract as one of the Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Statewide Projects funded by CalMHSA. Launched by the California Mental Health Directors Association in 2009, CalMHSA is a joint powers authority made up of county governments, working to improve mental health outcomes for all consumers; individual, families and communities. CalMHSA administers statewide programs funded by the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) or Proposition 63. MHSA recognizes the connection between mental health services and treatment and the impact of stigma and discrimination against people faced with mental health challenges.

The Community Roundtable’s mission is to reduce stigma and discrimination, and increase access to mental health services and treatments. Goals include developing strategies to reduce stigma and discrimination, coordinate a statewide public awareness campaign with CalMHSA and its partners, and work in partnership with the 12 regions in across the state to share best practices and share initiatives.



At the first-ever meeting, LACDMH District Chief, Sam Chan, Ph.D., called the meeting to order. Children's Bureau President/CEO Alex Morales and LACDMH Director Dr. Southard welcomed the attendees. They were followed by Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission Chairman Larry Gasco who discussed the planning process. Afterward, UACF CEO Oscar Wright gave a short presentation about the purpose of the roundtable. Groups later broke out to brainstorm and share their ideas of how they envision stigma and discrimination reduction over the next three years.

Invited members of the newly formed Community Roundtable included local leadership, community-based organizations, consumers and their families, parent advocates, health and human service providers, faith-based organizations, representatives from education, juvenile justice, child welfare systems, ethnic communities, youth, veterans, LGBTQ individuals and the private, business sector. Anyone who is interested in the Community Roundtable is encouraged to join. Another meeting is scheduled for December.

